

CHAMBER CONNECTION

A Publication of Salina Area Chamber of Commerce

December 2022 Volume 62, Number 10

Chamber announces Speaker for April 2023 Annual Meeting

COLIN O'BRADY
ATHLETE • ADVENTURER • AUTHOR

Salina
Area Chamber of Commerce

2022 HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE!



Salina

Area Chamber of Commerce

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

The Salina Area Chamber of Commerce **Chamber Connection** (USPS 478-100) is published by the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, 120 W. Ash, Salina, Kansas 67401. Periodical Postage paid at Salina, Kansas. Subscription rate to members is \$1.25 per year. Sylvia A. Rice, Editor. Consolidated Printing, layout and design. Postmaster: Send address changes to: **Chamber Connection**, PO Box 586, Salina, KS 67402-0586.

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From the CEO



Eric L. Brown

Dear Salina Chamber Members,

I write this with mixed emotions. My last day as President and CEO of the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce will be Friday, January 6, 2023. I started with the Chamber in March of 2011 as the Workforce Development Director. I've also held the roles of Business Development Director, and VP of Economic Development before accepting the President and CEO role in May of 2019. During those years, I have had the privilege of working with the SACC's dedicated staff, volunteers, and Board of Directors to work on some of Salina's biggest challenges including workforce development, childcare, housing, and supporting and advocating for the business community through the pandemic. I'm truly grateful for all the experiences, connections, and relationships that I've been a part of over

my time with the Chamber.

Highlights include working with USD 305 to help better align Career and Technical Education pathways to our community employers, working with Salina Area Technical College on both their Truck Driving Training Program and the doubling of their welding program to help meet industry demand, the creation of the Salina Area Young Professionals organization, working with and providing support to City, County, Airport Authority, consultants, and State officials on all items related to economic development including entrepreneurship support, business retention, expansions, and new business recruitment efforts. Advocacy for businesses and the obstacles and regulations at the local, state, and federal level were always top of mind and especially during the COVID pandemic.

I'm especially proud of the Chamber staff during that time that worked on behalf of so many businesses that had their doors shuttered and worked to find solutions and opportunities for businesses. Many do not know that the Salina Chamber of Commerce also has a foundation; through that foundation, we were able to allocate 163 grants totaling \$2.7 million dollars in funding to the hardest hit local small businesses via CARES funding from Saline County. Without the Chamber those funds would not have had the same impact to the business community that they did. Support from our Visit Salina division was key to the local hotel and hospitality sector during the pandemic and particularly in the year to maintain, promote, and service events, conventions, and military groups looking to get back to normal meeting and training schedules.

Another heavy lift that the organization was able to achieve during my time was reintroducing an Association Health Plan to our membership and small businesses in 2022. I began that work in 2018 and was able to see it through with the creation of the Chamber Blue of Kansas, which includes 56 Chambers across the state and over 3,000 individuals in the group that provides small businesses and organizations access to large group medical benefits! This impact will be positive for years to come.

A chamber of commerce is only as strong as its membership and from a state level, our organization is one of the biggest and viewed as a leader. The biggest reason for that is the staff of your Chamber. They are incredibly talented and passionate; they are the ones behind the scenes doing the work that 'most people think just happens' and the future of this Chamber is bright because of them. As long as there are businesses in Salina and Saline County, the work of a Chamber will never be finished and there are so many positive impacts that come directly and indirectly from this Chamber's efforts.

I look forward to remaining involved with the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce through my new role with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas. This is not goodbye, rather a sincere thank you for your kindness, generosity, and support.

With best wishes and sincere gratitude,

Eric L. Brown President/CEO
Salina Area Chamber of Commerce

HERE'S HOW TO CONTACT OUR CHAMBER STAFF

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Chamber Announces 2023 Annual Banquet Speaker

Colin O’Brady, Athlete, Adventurer and Author, will be the featured speaker at the 2023 Salina Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet. The event will be held Tuesday, April 4, in the Arena of the Tony’s Pizza Events Center (TPEC) beginning at 6:30pm. A membership networking reception will precede the banquet.

Colin O’Brady is a 10-time world record breaking explorer and one of the world’s best endurance athletes. He isn’t your typical adventurer despite his unmatched athletic accomplishments including a world-first solo crossing of Antarctica, a world-first ocean row across Drake Passage (from South America to Antarctica), and summiting Mt. Everest twice. Colin is an expert on mindset, a highly sought-after keynote speaker and a New York Times bestselling author. He’s also a television host, an executive producer and an entrepreneur who has built and sold companies. And, he’s done it all after overcoming a devastating accident to prove that anything is possible.

His message will be one to instill hope and open your mind to possibilities! Take a

look at the world of Colin O’Brady, via his website at <https://www.colinobradyc.com/>.

The banquet will be held in the arena of the Events Center, with seating of tables of eight including dinner. Tickets for Chamber members are \$60 per person for the banquet. Tickets for non-members are \$85 per person for the banquet. Reservations for members and the general public can be made by calling the Chamber office ticket hotline at 1-785-827-9310, ext. 123, stopping by the Chamber office, 120 W. Ash, or emailing Sandy Cole at scole@salinakansas.org. Tickets will be reserved on a first-come, first-serve basis.

A limited number of sponsorships are available. For details regarding the cost and amenities of the sponsorships, persons can contact the Chamber office.

The evening will consist of remarks by outgoing Board Chair Travis Young and incoming Chair Dr. Alysia Starkey, a brief review of the Chamber’s accomplishments in 2022, and the address by Colin O’Brady.

For more information on the banquet and Colin O’Brady, go to the Chamber’s website at www.salinakansas.org.



Salina
Area Chamber of Commerce





2nd Annual Building Bridges Event Held

USD 305, in partnership with the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce and WorkforceONE, held the 2nd Annual Building Bridges event on November 3rd. Building Bridges invites employers and community members into our secondary schools to learn more about Career & Technical Education, as well as learn about industry opportunities to support CTE.



“Our high schools are doing really innovative work in Career and Technical Education, and play a significant role in training the workforce of the future,” Renee Duxler, Director of Economic and Workforce Development at the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, said. “It’s so important to connect local industry with these efforts to not only guide this training, but also provide opportunities for internship or apprenticeship and ultimately retention of local talent.”

The evening included refreshments provided by the district’s culinary arts program, as well as tours of other career pathways and programs, such as healthcare, construction, and welding. Tom Christy, co-founder of GeoProbe Systems also provided the keynote, and addressed students specifically with an inspiring message about entrepreneurship and local business.

Employers were encouraged to fill out a survey that asked them if they would be interested in volunteer opportunities with the high schools, including guest speaking, job shadowing, and internships at their businesses.

If you missed the program but are interested in learning more about how to connect with USD 305, you can reach out directly to Renee Duxler at 785-827-9301 or rduxler@salinakansas.org. Renee coordinates the School-To-Career Program between the Chamber and USD 305, and would be happy to discuss opportunities with you.



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Salina Area Chamber of Commerce

For more information about the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce
www.salinakansas.org

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628 N. Broadway Blvd.
785-825-5975 • www.adisystems.net

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Vaughn Perry
1647 Sunflower Road
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EVOLVE NUTRITION

Eleighny McKim
2113 E. Crawford
316-249-3359



University Events Generate Connections



Last month, Renee Duxler and Eric Brown, on behalf of the Salina Chamber of Commerce hosted a connection event with Fort Hays State University. There were almost 80 individuals in attendance that were interested in getting connected to FHSU. Tisa Mason, President of Fort Hays State, presented information and updates to the crowd as well, highlighting upcoming projects and programs, including a cybersecurity micro-internship that will be available to small businesses throughout Kansas.

The event was a part of a larger workforce development effort to connect local employers to regents universities in Kansas. “Currently over 4,500 alum of FHSU reside in Saline County, and the Chamber already has a strong relationship with the university,” Eric Brown, CEO/President of the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, said. “Our goal is to facilitate those connections with our post-secondary schools throughout Kansas so that our employers remain competitive in recruitment efforts.”

In the same vein, the Salina Area Chamber also partnered with Kansas State University by participating in their regional visit to

Salina on Dec. 5th. An important focus on this visit was speaking with and connecting with employers, workforce development professionals, and other business and community leaders on workforce readiness and industry needs. Hosted by Great Plains Manufacturing, KSU President Richard Linton addressed the crowd of over 90 attendees. His message was clear: As a land grant university and as a part of the educational pipeline of Kansas, Kansas State University is interested in connecting with the Salina community to learn more about who Salina is, what Salina does, and how we can work together in recruiting graduates and forging new partnerships.

Dr. Alysia Starkey, CEO & Dean of the KSU Salina campus also talked about KSU Salina’s new partnership with Great Plains Manufacturing that provides on-the-job training and tuition for interested KSU Salina students. Superintendent Linn Exline from USD 305 and Renee Duxler, Economic and Workforce Development Director for the Chamber, also described the School-To-Career, Building Bridges, and Youth Entrepreneurship programs that provide connections between education and

industry. “Employers are experiencing a lot of pain points and discomfort right now with the tight labor market and need for skills training,” Duxler said, “It continues to take getting creative and thinking outside-the-box in conceptualizing what workforce readiness, recruitment and retention continues to look like for Salina.”

“Currently over 4,500 alum of FHSU reside in Saline County, and the Chamber already has a strong relationship with the university,”

- Eric Brown, CEO/President of the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber will continue to collaborate with Board of Regents schools to make connections. If you are an alum of Wichita State, Emporia State, Pittsburg State, Kansas University, or Washburn and would like to be a part of making these connections in the community, please reach out to Renee Duxler at rduxler@salinakansas.org, or 785-827-9301.



take **5** to meet

Gambino's Pizza®

Owner(s)
Clayton Herdman

Email: salinagambinospizza@gmail.com

What service/product do you provide?

We offer incredible pizza, pasta, sandwiches, appetizers, and many other products. We allow for carry-out, dine-in, and delivery. During lunch, we offer a buffet that allows us to showcase all of our amazing products.



When did you start your business and why?

I officially opened my restaurant on September 10th, 2021. However, I started developing, building, and creating my business in April of 2021 all while studying at Washburn University and competing on the Track and Field team. I started my business because I love interacting with people. While growing up I was raised in the food industry and found my passion to serve individuals. Because of this passion, I was led down the path of opening my own restaurant and continue to grow my relationship with the community of Salina, while providing them with the best food possible.



Anything else you would like the community to know?

I would like to people in the community to know that Salina has been amazing to my fiancé and me. We moved to Salina specifically for me to open Gambino's Pizza. In the process of that, my fiancé was able to

start an awesome career in the Emergency Department as a registered nurse here at Salina Regional Health Center. I would also like to encourage young individuals to pursue their passion for business. I opened the Salina store when I was 22 and received a lot of feedback about being pretty young to own a business. I really encourage young individuals to chase their dreams and understand that hard work pays off and you can do anything you want!

See the entire interview, and others, posted at:
<https://www.salinakansas.org/take-5.html>

RIBBON CUTTINGS with the Bluecoat Ambassadors!



Groundbreaking Celebration to officially announce The Villas at **Salina Presbyterian Manor** was held on Tuesday, November 1, 2022.



A Ribbon Cutting was held on Tuesday, November 15th for **South View Estates**. South View Estates LLC is a group of developers who have come together to create housing opportunities in South Salina with the help of the Moderate Income Housing Grant. This area consists of townhomes and single-family homes.



On Thursday, November 3rd, **Salina Regional Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Clinic**, located at 520 S. Santa Fe. On the 4th floor, held a combined Business After Hours and Ribbon Cutting to celebrate their new facilities.

In The News



The **YMCA of Salina** is proud to announce that SHRMA, the Salina Human Resource Management Association, has honored Mai Lin Wohler with the SHRMA Diversity of Excellence Award. Please help us congratulate and thank her for work not only here at the YMCA, but in our community. Mai recently began a shared services program through the Y where she provides HR support to local nonprofits and other YMCAs. We are excited to expand this role in the near future. Congratulations to Mai Lin Wohler, the winner of the 2022 SHRMA Diversity of Excellence Award!

Celebrate the holiday season with the **Salina Symphony and Ballet Salina** production of *The Nutcracker* December 10 at 7pm and Dec. 11 at 4pm at the Stiefel Theatre. This beloved story of a young girl's Christmas Eve dream never fails to touch the heart and create a lasting memory for the whole family. Guest artists Oscar Fernandez and Cecily Khuner of Ballet Memphis will dance as Cavalier and Sugar Plum Fairy. Tickets may be purchased at the Stiefel Theatre Box Office, by calling 785-827-1998 or online at www.salinasymphony.org. Single admission is \$29 or \$39 and \$19 for students/children ages 3 and up.



GOT NEWS?

Do you have news to share about your business or organization? Email rice@salinakansas.org and we'll publish it in an upcoming issue of *Chamber Connection*.

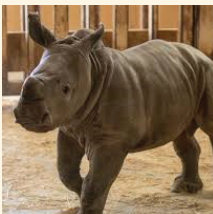


The **Salina Art Center** asks you to help them welcome Brent Martin to their team as the new Cinema Manager. Brent has a passion for independent filmmaking and the arts. He studied Mass Communications at Hutchinson Community College and is currently a student at Salina Technical College, studying Business Administration and Technology. Film is the fastest-growing contemporary art medium on the planet. Adding Brent to Salina Art Center brings opportunities to enhance the movie-going experience in our community and build new audiences for the only downtown Salina movie theater. Maybe even a film festival in the future!



Saturday December 10th from 10am-Noon the **VFW**, 1108 W. Crawford, is holding a "Fill the Dump Truck" collecting toys for the local **Salvation Army**, thanks to Harbin Construction for the loan of a truck. Santa and the Grinch will be inside the VFW for kids to meet and get pictures with. There will also be cookies and punch and some kids' activities. So, come out, bring a toy to share and the kids for a great time!

Rolling Hills Zoo, 625 N. Hedville Rd, is accepting applications for their Zoo Teens program, through January 3. This volunteer program is open to teens ages 13-17 and provides a great experience for these young people! Details for this program and other volunteer opportunities are available on their [website](http://www.rollinghillzoo.com).



Enjoy last minute shopping with **Salina Downtown!** Make sure to stop in at Campbell Plaza to see the beautiful lighted Christmas tree and get a picture with Santa December 10, 1:30-3:30pm and December 17, 1-3pm. Happy Holidays!



150 Exline

A Five-Generation Journey to 150 Years

Imagine for a moment if you will, being able to track back your lineage 150 years to the year 1872, or five generations going on six; a privilege many people do not have the ability to perform. Many people even have difficulty recalling the names of their great grandparents



or beyond. Despite the difficulty to keep the family tree updated for so many of us, Exline thrives at keeping a detailed history of their business and their family that has owned and operated the Industrial Repair and Manufacturing Services business for the past century and a half.

Exline Inc. has quite an extensive and interesting history for a business that started out in rural Kansas. Travel with me back to the year 1870 where we see a tall, muscular, 18-year-old R.W. Exline leave his Ohioan home on his covered wagon, with his anvil, and a bountiful sense of adventure. R.W. traveled west until he found his new home, the busy cow town of Abilene, Kansas. It was here that he unloaded his anvil and his forge from his wagon at the base of a tree, not too far south of the Abilene Jail and set up his open-aired shop. Immediately he ran into a demand for his services building and repairing wagons for pioneers like himself heading west. At that time, most every town had their own small powerplant that would provide electricity to the town, and R.W. had found himself servicing those generators as well. Throughout R.W.'s life, he would move the business from Abilene, to just north of Gypsum, and finally to Kipp, Kansas.

For the entire EXLINE story click → **HERE** ←

THANK YOU

to these Chamber members who continue to support our programs through their membership renewal.

- ▶ Accessible Home Care, LLC
- ▶ AT&T Kansas
- ▶ Catholic Diocese of Salina
- ▶ Eisenhower Presidential Library & Museum
- ▶ Icon Structures, Inc.
- ▶ Ka-Comm Inc.
- ▶ Kansas Public Media Center, Inc.
- ▶ LifeSave Transport
- ▶ Love Chloe Foundation
- ▶ Miller Family Chiropractic
- ▶ Millwood Realty - Gary Norris
- ▶ Radio Kansas
- ▶ Saint Francis Ministries
- ▶ Sharp Performance

Thank You



Dollars & Sense

KSHSAA 6A Girls State Golf

\$204,936

KSHSAA 5A & 6A State Volleyball

\$926,752

Salina Crossroads Marathon

\$446,922

KSHSAA 2A State Football Championship Game

\$422,880

Salina Crossroads Marathon Brings Big Economic Impact to Salina

by Daniel Craig, Salina Crossroads Marathon (with permission)



The Salina Crossroads Marathon held on November 5th in downtown Salina generated an estimated economic impact of \$446,296. The economic impact estimate was done by Visit Salina, a division of the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce. Over 800 runners from 30 different states registered for the inaugural event which included a marathon, half marathon, 4.01K Family Fun Run, Half Marathon Relay, and

Marathon Relay. This was the first USATF Certified and Boston Marathon Qualifier event ever held in Salina. “The Salina Crossroads Marathon featured an electric guitar version of the National Anthem by Howard Mahan, a fast and scenic course, music stations throughout the course, custom designed medals by Vortex, and great post-race food and photo ops.” said Co-Race Director Daniel Craig. “It has been amazing to see the posts on Facebook from runners across the United States on how much they enjoyed the event and how appreciative they were of our amazing volunteers and the tremendous support from community members who came out to cheer them on. A group from Texas did a YouTube series ‘Driving from Texas to Kansas for the Salina Crossroads Marathon’ and have offered to let us use it to help promote future Salina Crossroads Marathon events.”

The Salina Crossroads Marathon had over forty organizations provide support for the race ranging from financial sponsorships to providing supplies and materials for the event. “Chris Lehecka, a Co-Race Director, did an amazing job of leading the efforts to get sponsors for the race” said Craig. Thanks to these generous sponsors 100% of the entry fees will be going to support youth sports in Saline County. The Salina Crossroads Marathon is excited to announce they will be providing \$25,340 to four youth sports organizations in Saline County: Salina Family YMCA, Kansas Youth Sports, USD 305 School Marathon, and Salina Area Youth Sportsmanship Initiative.

Tiffany Benien, Visit Salina is excited about the success of the inaugural event, “For a first year marathon to have a turn out as large as the Salina Crossroads Marathon is amazing! This shows that the organization of the event was well thought out and executed. Praise to Chris Lehecka and Daniel Craig, Co-Directors of the marathon, for their excellent work! From the Visit Salina perspective, the reach of the event with runners coming from across the United States is exactly the type of exposure that Salina wants. We were excited to be able to survey participants, and the results about their experience in Salina was overwhelmingly positive. Based on their feedback and the tremendous local support of the Salina Crossroads Marathon, I’m looking forward to next year’s marathon and anticipate seeing growth as the event evolves on an annual basis.”

The Salina Crossroads Marathon planning committee would like to thank the City of Salina, Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, Salina Downtown Inc., and all of the sponsors and supporting organizations. Thank you to the community for your patience as we know that shutting down streets causes everyone to make some changes in their travel plans and the routes they take on the day of the race. The Salina Crossroad Marathon appreciates the more than 100 volunteers who helped out at the event and everyone in the community who came out and cheered on the runners. The Salina Crossroads Marathon race planning committee will be reviewing post-race survey feedback from participants and will work with the City of Salina and community partners to host an even bigger and better event in 2023.

SALINA MEETS GRIDIRON GOAL OF GREAT HOSPITALITY

Visit Salina hosted the **KSHSAA 2A State Football Championship on Saturday, November 26 at Salina Stadium.** In front of a very enthusiastic crowd, Nemaha Central High School defeated Kingman High School 33-17.

Thank you to USD #305, 1st Choice Security, Salina Optimists and more than 60 Visit Salina volunteers and Chamber staff that helped make the event a success!



The Salina Crossroads Marathon welcomes new committee members and sponsors. If you would like to be involved with next year’s event you can contact the Salina Crossroads Marathon at runsalinacrossroads@gmail.com

\$It Pays to Attend\$

Cami Dinkel, Big Brothers Big Sisters, receives her Attendance Drawing prize 'check' from Hank Boyer, Chamber Bluecoat Ambassador and [Salina Regional Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Clinic](#) at their recent BAH.

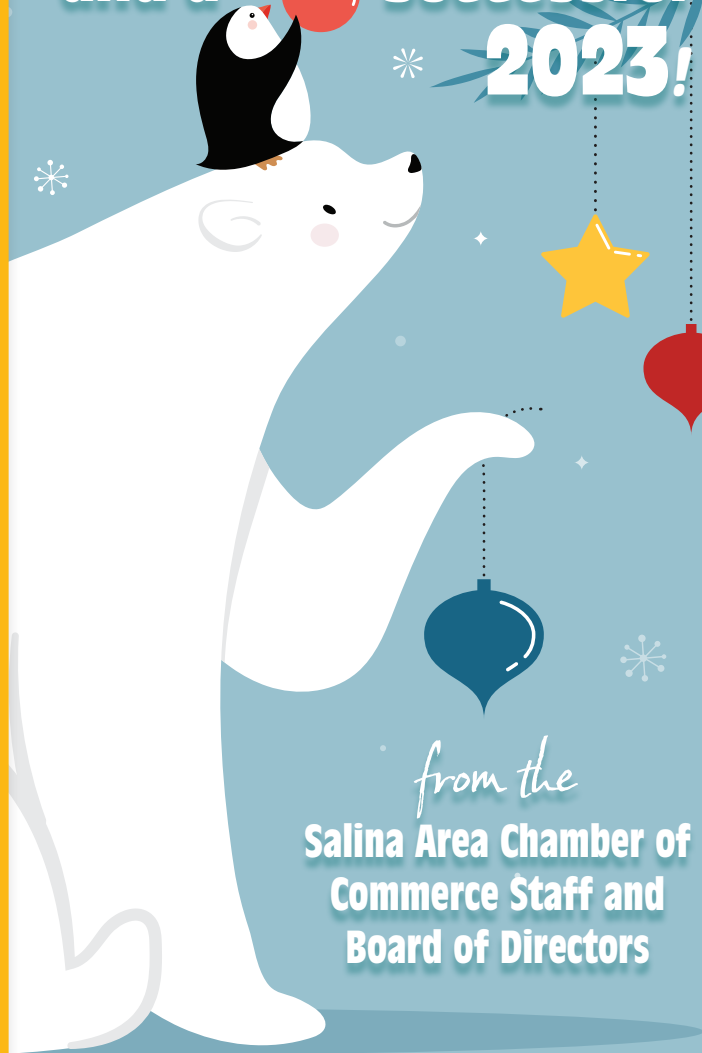


Jenell Hulse, Bank VI, receives a gift certificate from Ashley Howard of The Sullivan, while Tony Born receives the Attendance Drawing 'check' from Jeni Adams, Chamber Bluecoat Ambassador and Ashley Howard.



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Wishing you a Happy Holiday Season and a Successful 2023!



from the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce Staff and Board of Directors

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Salina Chamber of Commerce



Visit Salina



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Featuring the NEW Visit Salina Guide, SalinaAE.com Calendar, Chamber Business Directory, Special Offers and MORE!



2022 HIGHLIGHTS OF CHAMBER PROGRAMS AND WORK

We begin a look at the highlights from 2022, which will continue in the January newsletter.

NEW PROGRAMS IN 2022

Quarterly Luncheons for Builder Level Members and above averaged an attendance of 20 people, with these featured speakers:

- Q1 – **Tim Rogers** • Salina Airport Authority
- Q2 – **Phil Smith-Hanes** • Saline County Administrator
- Q3 – **Linn Exline** • USD 305 Superintendent
- Q4 – **Mike Schrage** • Salina City Manager

Our first **Builders Breakfast** for Builder Level Members and above had 60 people in attendance. The agenda included announcements from Board President Travis Young, and open discussion between Chamber Board Members, Builder Level Members, and Chamber staff.

SPRINGBOARD

This is a new program developed by one of the 2021 Leadership Salina teams, which is offered to the public for board service training. An initial training event was hosted in April 2022, and we will announce a 2023 date soon!



The **Blue Coat Ambassadors** is the result of a major re-vamping process in 2022. The program has grown and enjoyed a successful 2022, organizing and hosting 40 ribbon cutting ceremonies for Chamber members active in our community. Ashley Finan and Stephanie Gillig serve as Chamber staff directors of the program.

The program is comprised of 25 ambassadors grouped into three divisions – the Ribbon Cutting Team, Hospitality Team, and Registration Team.

RIBBON CUTTING TEAM

- **Jeni Adams** • Bank of Tescott
- **Valerie Andrews** • Fund Administrative Services
- **Hank Boyer** • HCB Management Services
- **Rob Carlson** • Smart Insurance
- **Hannah Crickman** • Salina Art Center
- **Marcia Demuth** • Great Plains Federal Credit Union
- **Cara Emig** • First Bank Kansas
- **Dusty Farris** • Sunflower Bank
- **Audrey George** • Design Central
- **Shannon Gotti** • Equity Bank
- **Sier Hieronymus** • Clean Team
- **James Lambert** • Retired
- **Lani Newton** • Sunflower Bank
- **Nancy Nickell** • Eaglecrest Retirement Community
- **Kathy Schwerdtfager** • Bank of Tescott
- **Amber Slater** • Evergy
- **Kyle Weiser** • Tony's Pizza Events Center

HOSPITALITY & REGISTRATION TEAM

- **Jeni Adams** • Bank of Tescott
- **Hank Boyer** • HCB Management Services
- **Hannah Crickman** • Salina Art Center
- **Cami Dinkel** • Big Brother Big Sisters
- **John Elmore** • Volunteer
- **Dusty Farris** • Sunflower Bank
- **Bobby Hieronymus** • Clean Team
- **Sier Hieronymus** • Clean Team
- **James Lambert** • Retired
- **Lani Newton** • Sunflower Bank
- **Lane Nichols** • The Bennington State Bank
- **Cindy Short** • Credit Union of America
- **Jennifer Sturges** • Volunteer

PHOTOGRAPHER

- **Hannah Crickman** • Salina Art Center

If you have interest in joining the Blue Coat Ambassadors, please contact either at: Stephanie Gillig: sgillig@salinakansas.org or (785) 827-9310 ext. 124; Ashley Finan: afinan@salinakansas.org or (785) 827-9310 ext. 132.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Project OPEN is a special initiative within the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce that provides support and resources to local entrepreneurs and start-ups. These include:

- Free business training classes in collaboration with Kansas State University- Salina
- Gap-loan funding options that help with access to capital
- Business development grants for start-ups and expansions
- Networking opportunities through StartUp Salina at The Temple.

In 2022, Project OPEN provided eight classes (two classes quarterly) to aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners. This program has seen a huge increase in entrepreneurial activity again, with over 51 people completing those courses (an increase of 325% from 12 people in 2021).

Project OPEN also helped provide gap-loan funding for five new businesses in 2022, totaling \$203,500 in start-up or expansion capital. We also distributed \$20,000 in grant funding.

Also of note for 2022, Project OPEN became authorized to process applications for GROW KS Minority/Women-Led Starter and Rural/Urban Distressed Loans. GROW KS is the statewide program (facilitated by Network Kansas) that is working to distribute the \$69 million in State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) funding that Kansas received earlier this



year from the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Two of the five businesses funded this year received GROW KS dollars.

Access to training and access to capital are two of the largest barriers for many entrepreneurs, and we're proud to continue to work with our state and local partners to provide both. If you are interested in learning more about Project OPEN, visit www.projectopensalina.com or contact Renee Duxler, Economic & Workforce Development Director at 785-827-9301 or rduxler@salinakansas.org.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

This member service is designed to inform members, both new and established, of Chamber operations and the benefits and programs the Chamber provides. 2023 dates coming soon!

Two events fall within the Ag Division of the Chamber and are long-term mainstays of our programming. The **57TH Annual Kansas All Breeds Junior Dairy Show** was hosted in August at the Salina County Expo and Tony's Pizza Events Center.



57TH Annual Mid America Farm Expo was hosted at Tony's Pizza Events Center and Salina County Expo Center in March with nearly 200 exhibitors. This event remains one of the largest and most relevant Ag shows in the Midwest. The 58th Expo will be hosted March 22-24, 2023.

VISIT SALINA 2022

ESTIMATING IMPACT OF VISITOR SPENDING

Visit Salina works with many organizations, groups and events throughout the year. A large part of our mission is to work toward creating economic impact for our community through the spending of new dollars by visitors.

Calculation of estimated visitor spending and economic impact is not an exact science by any means, but we do believe that our approach is sensible, fairly comprehensive, but on the conservative side.

A worksheet is created for each event we work with – whether that is a sports tournament, convention or other group client. It begins with the estimated participants and their anticipated spending profile. How many hotel rooms will they use, for how many nights, at what rate(s)? How many people purchasing food and beverages, fuel, retail and other specific 'spends' (tickets to an event, etc.) These areas of spending are calculated and combined to *estimate visitor spending*.

Several years ago we were asked to provide overall economic impact of these events, including any estimated multiplier. We asked the business school at Wichita State University to help determine an appropriate multiplier for our specific market, which they set at 1.6. This multiplier takes into account some of the indirect spending by the hotels and other suppliers.

VISIT SALINA SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

The following spending estimates represent 60* sports events that Visit Salina worked with in 2022.

Youth Baseball/Softball (not KSHSAA)	\$ 4,363,416
All KSHSAA Events	\$ 4,004,442
Kid Wrestling Tourn. of Champions	\$ 891,120
Senior LPGA Legends Event	\$ 772,760
KKOA Leadsled Spectacular	\$ 1,528,160
Youth Basketball (Fieldhouse)	\$ 649,922
Crossroads Marathon	\$ 446,296
Other	\$ 1,349,420
Total Estimated Visitor Impact*	\$14,005,536



Visit Salina was honored to work with local organizers of two particular events that were new to the community. The **Senior LPGA Legends** event was hosted by the Salina Country Club in July. This was a huge undertaking for SCC and the many volunteers they coordinated for the event. Tiffany Benien, Sports Manager for Visit Salina, worked with the event in a variety of ways. This was a significant boost to our already busy summer in Salina!



In May 2022, the **KSHSAA 4A State Softball Tournament** was again hosted by Visit Salina, but at the USD 305 South High Softball facility for the first time. Teams, fans and KSHSAA were very impressed with the site, and the event will again be held at South High in 2023. This change makes it possible for another event to utilize the fields at Bill Burke Park during the same weekend, which only increases the impact of sports!



The first annual **Salina Crossroads Marathon**, led by an incredible local organizing committee (LOC), was a huge success all around (see article in Visit Salina section). Again, Tiffany was an active partner throughout the process with other Chamber staff assisting as well. KUDOS to both groups for bringing first-class events to Salina!

Sports events are particularly dependent on volunteers, serving as ticket sellers, tee shirt vendors, team hosts and in other ways. If you are interested in learning more, contact Tiffany Benien at tbenien@salinakansas.org or 785-827-9310, ext 130.

